

A photograph of a white brick building with a rusted metal fire escape. The building has several windows, some of which are boarded up with plywood. A blue tarp is visible in one of the windows. The fire escape is made of rusted metal and has a chain hanging from it. The overall scene is one of urban decay and industrial aesthetics.

gardyloo

Literature & Arts Magazine

Fall 2014

Editor's Note

*“Creativity is
the power to
connect the
seemingly
unconnected.”*

—William Plomer

Editor-in Chief Jaimie Swann
Managing Editor Erica Dodson
Chief Designer Taylor Golding

Committee Head Kaitlyn Miller
& staff

with special thanks to

Advisors, Laurie Kutchins & Rose Gray
Brianna Eagle
JMU College of Arts and Letters
JMU Media Board
Mary Murphy and McClung Companies

The cover was printed on Classic Laid Paper and the content on Flo Dull using CMYK color. Design using Adobe InDesign CS6 and Adobe Photoshop CS6 on Desktop Computers in the Forbes and Moody Hall computer labs at James Madison University. McClung Companies in Waynesboro, VA printed 1,300 all-color copies, which the staff distributed to the JMU community free of charge in December 2014. /// This issue includes the following fonts: Caviar Dreams and Florence, regular and bold, in sizes 45pt -- 90pt for titles; Raleway, extra light, regular, and bold for body copy and bylines in sizes 9pt -- 14pt. All stylistic attributes were meant to reinforce this semester's theme of connectivity. /// Staff and general submissions were judged separately. Staff submissions were accepted until midnight on October 6th and general submissions were accepted until midnight on October 13th. The Art and Writing Committees chose 42 pieces out of a total of 306 entries. Judging was completed through voting with the Editor-in-Chief and Managing Editor excluded from all selection processes. Artist Statements were requested by the Editor-In-Chief and Chief Designer based on popularity and space allowances. /// Send all submissions to jmugardylloo@gmail.com or through our website www.jmugardylloo.org. See our website for submission guidelines.

www.jmugardylloo.org & jmugardylloo@gmail.com

Editor's Note

Dear Reader,

About two years ago, I took a Studies in Literacy class. On the first day of class, the professor asked us what book has influenced us the most. Most people said one of the books you're required to read in class, the ones that have become classics: Dickens, Plath, you know the kind.

I didn't even have to think about it. My answer wasn't profound or inspired. I chose *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. Don't judge me yet, there is a story...

I changed schools in the middle of first grade, not just schools, but a different part of the state. This wasn't a big deal, except for the fact that my previous school was still working on the alphabet. At my new school, I was supposed to be able to read.

Needless to say, first grade was a mess of tears for both me and my mother.

By second grade, I had caught up for the most part, but reading was still a pretty touchy subject.

This was the year that I picked up *Harry Potter*. At eight, I didn't understand all of the words and I'm pretty sure it took me all year to finish, but that book was a catalyst for me.

My love of reading started with that book. I found my escape from reality within the pages and a passion for words that I might have missed.

That passion inevitably led me here, writing this letter to you.

Now here comes the corny part, but I will make it quick.

You never know when your catalyst will happen. When one move, one opportunity may impact the rest of your life.

Gardy Loo has and will be someone's starting point. It's what I love about Gardy Loo and why I put my time and my heart into this magazine.

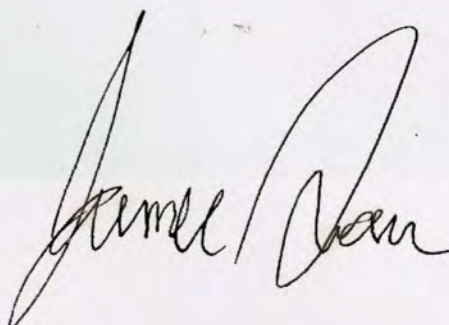
I want to help someone find their passion.

Take a minute and study the possibilities held inside of this edition, see the passion and the purpose that won't end here.

Appreciate the fact that you might be looking at a catalyst to someone's future.

Take your time, but don't forget to look out for your catalyst as well.

Cheers to all the possibilities,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jaimie Swann', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Jaimie Swann
Editor-In-Chief

Lessons From Lightning

Zoe Velling

Do it.

I dare you.

Chase the storm.

Proudly strut the line between charisma and insanity.

As your sprint towards destruction-

apathy nipping at your heels-

watch the lightning with your Kodak eyes

and commit the sparks to memory

so that you may watch the playback

and remember

how to fall beautifully

with a thousand pairs of eyes on you,

how to slam into the earth

and thank God that you're no longer among the clouds.

As this thought ignites your mind

behind closed lids,

let your soul recall

that though there's joy in the rise,

there's humanity in the fall.







Bloom Carly Snowdon

The port de bras of a drummer.

(Upstairs with Jim Doxas)

Dominique Marmolejo

This man
has split his body in two
like a dancer –

bowing out from the barre and
bracing his center somewhere
between the floorboards and the
light wood beneath his fingertips.

He bends at the waist and
brings the beat out of his shoulders,
swinging through positions on the

1 2 3 4 as he

Tap tippity
Tap tap
Tippity
Tap tap tippity tippity taps

on the high hat
with his hand high
like a taxi fly making a beeline on a busy day,

while his left hand

lays out

like a cat in the sun,

rolling around with its belly out
to see if you'll scratch

(cause he's got nowhere better to be than) here

and here and

maybe a little
here.

This man has
two brains

And the one in the mirror

is not a reflection.

He is dancing a one man duet,
and everyone else is only tapping
their left foot.

A River of Consciousness

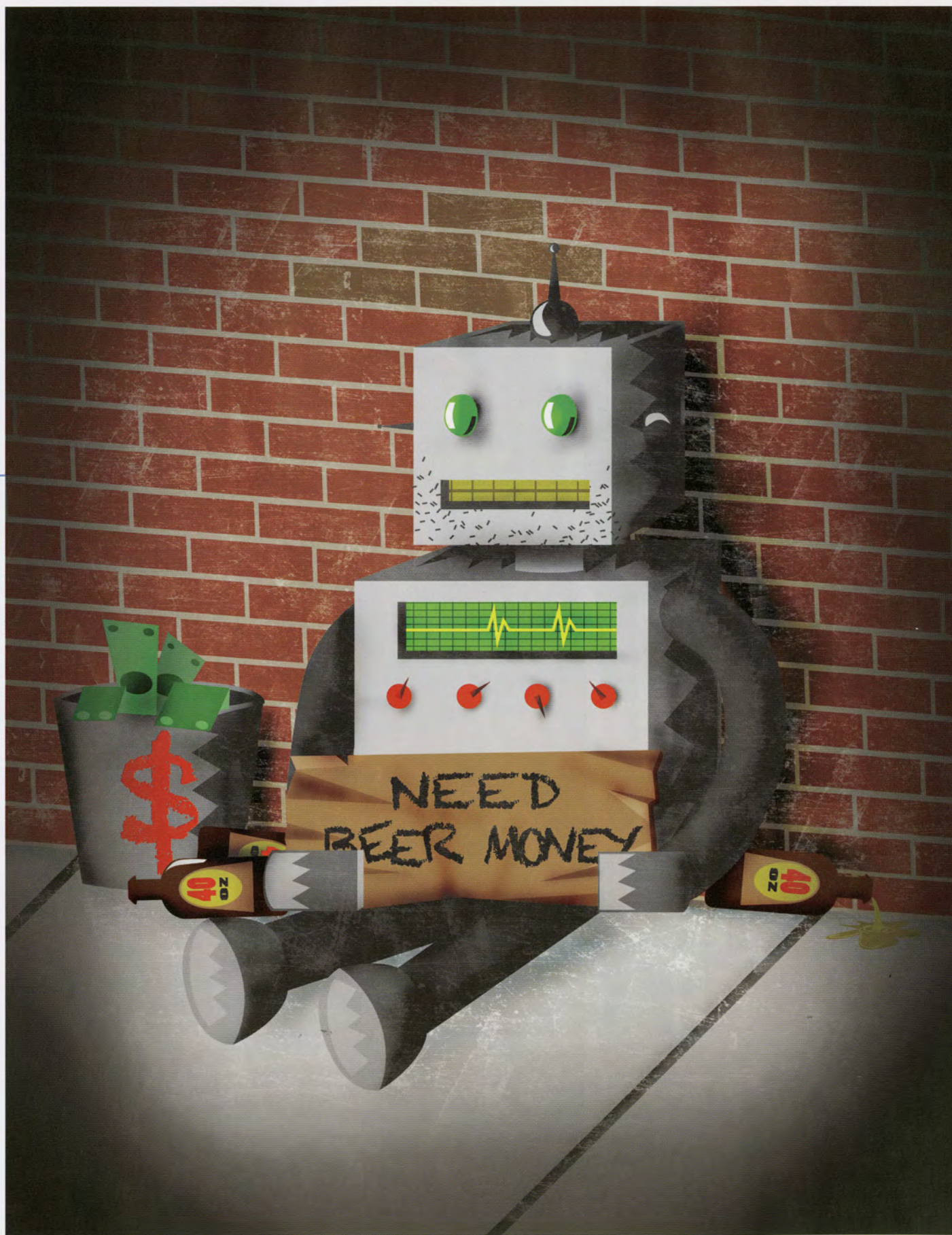
from the Veins of James Murphy

Tommy Sheffield

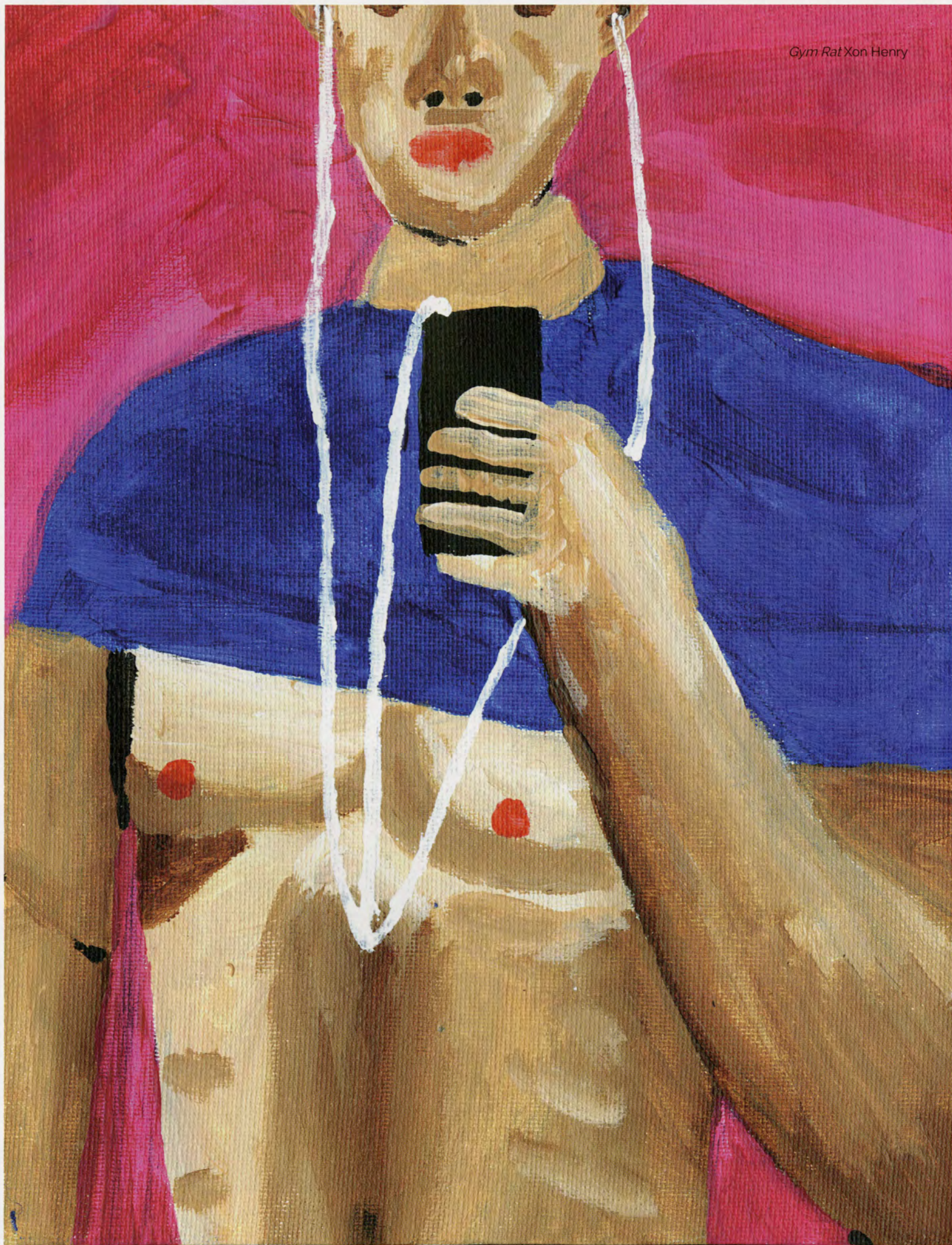
I open my mouth to shout and out flows
The many million bricks and bones of this city
Metal skeletons, crumpled and gritty
Unwrapping and unbending,
A great amorphous blobbed contortion
Scattering and settling
Into shapes like
Great stone limbs that weigh
On steel bones and tin tendons
Sturdy unnerving rapid and swerving
Bending into my eyes like pliers
To grip the image of a black necropolis
And press it deep into my brain
Yet I keep my love for this same
Old battered bunch of crumbling castle memories
Broken buildings and shattered glass and murdered chivalry
Unwoven fences and razor wire remembrance
Where meth heads' dry skin cracks in the fickle weather
Orange guarded by blue, steel chain tethered,
When I get out I know I'll find
Life around every corner
That's neither bought nor stolen
It is here and there and around these sidewalks
That crisscross with train tracks and highways
And downtown porn shops that fill holes in the wall
They're all holes in the wall but I like that about them

The stacked books in the bookstore, all used and discounted
The Midtown Market with import beers and wines and the ciders
That taste like a childhood of apples falling from a drunken tree
Warped and twisted, with thorns around its knees
It festers until I can't but want to lessen
Myself and whether I've found
A reason to stay alive
But I can see that quilt museum
Downtown Books
The Rosetta Stone building
Those sights from behind a great stone wall
Give glare to the razor-sharp wires
That slice experience and sever love while
The sight of a tall stone wall towers
Over the risks of wrists clasped in steel
Knives through the skin, our lives are peeling
Like the fruit of a red orange split and splattered
With the blade dug in, pull it off piece by piece
Piece by piece, until only a bit of its warmth
Remains and I'm left to stand
On a cold concrete beach
Like a bold,
Bald spot bane
While waves
Of electric
Sunsets
Burn
Hot
In
My
Brain
You, holding it over me, obtain
While my legs stay wrapped in silver
My wrists, clasped and clamped to worship
The world that walks free outside these walls
And clothes me in Halloween orange like a ghoul
Like a werewolf a freak a frankenstein a monster and
Shouldn't you be reading something else than
Some sob story from a slack-jawed idiot
Who ruined a family one pick-up trucked night
Drunken and bloated in the hot October moonlight
Slurring my wheels and revving my words to find

My body acting different, grabbing for the stars
With my feet pressing down to the floor, what floor
Remained beneath the pedal of a pedigree killer
Coming to wreck the front door of your family's home
With a note to the neighbors with news of your tragic demise
That might just have earned a tear from my eyes
If I could just see past these damn prison walls
If I could just name one star certainly and know
That the shapes I trace have meaning, that the
Words I match have grace, but I'm a weakened
Form birthing softly, finding desperate reasons
To stay alive, like wondering why my family still
Writes letters for me to receive and ignore and never
Respond to because that family I killed would
Never approve of that advantage on my behalf
For I am a monster, I am, at least I feel that way
The world sees me that way and I fake caring for
Bloodshed and drug use and crime successes and
Past murders and gambles and maybe once in a
While I might like some goddamn butter in my
Mashed potatoes, but they know that my misery
Is what the state must see, so I suffer quietly
Beneath a sheltered black sea of shining stars
That flip the horizon on a swivel and my eyes
Spin with it, they spin the fiery anger that has
Built in my hearth of a heart and I wonder so briskly
How my shattered history earned a place in real history
Such a disgusting allowance my name has earned and
My family my family they've ruined for me and still
Defend our family name, they defend it for me
And come visit every month to share
For a while and learn that my life is
As menial as bile and wouldn't
You be interested to learn
That this book I've read
Twelve times has been
Read by men like me
Men who sought truth
In printed words written
By other aggravated men
Men who realized that
In a steel-gripped hell
The truth of the world
Is in concrete ballads
And metallic words.



Gym Rat Xon Henry



Meagan Riley

Tweets from 2 A.M.

i can see the moon through the shades from my bed

and i can't sleep. i can't sleep.

memories flicker across my mind, half-eaten
like flames burned through the celluloid film in my mind

i can't remember anything else, but here in the darkness
i remember something awful.

i remember sledding with my friend.
(the flickering beams of moonlight must make me think of snow).

and i remember the long icy hill, the forgotten footprints
of those who were here before us

the way we fit our tiny snowboots in them
to see what we would become.

i remember the snap, the unnatural angle of her leg,
the scream and the tears that ran down her face

she had cried, and in childish panic, i had run

and when i came back, ashamed of what i'd done,
i saw her there with fire in her accusing gaze

and three EMTs who had put a stint on her leg like it was their job

(as i suppose it was).

and i think about how we were never friends again.

i have always wanted to be the narrator of my own story.
but i don't think i deserve that now.

so i sit here on this website, with a 140 character limit,
trying my best to be someone with a story, someone with meaning.

and to be honest

i don't think it's working.

B-Chord

Brittany Fisher

I was on a crowded street in broad daylight
when my innocence was shot.
The revolver spit bullets like an assembly line
and I was on the ground.
Nobody called the police,
nobody even flinched.
I guess they figured,
this was the norm for little black girls.
I had to have my own funeral.
Wrote on my tombstone in crayon.
The stench of the corpse
was strong enough to sucker punch you,
because I couldn't quite bury it right.
Couldn't get it down six feet so I had to settle for two.
The shovel was too heavy for my eight-year-old hands to
understand that my splinters were not trophies,
my bruises were not battle scars.
I was too young, to know what I was fighting for,
too young to know that I was even at war.
That society had put me in uniform,
and made me a child soldier
before I was even old enough to have
combat as a vocabulary word.

From that point, the seasons felt like knives
that cookie cut too many changes at once and
my mind wasn't ripe enough to keep up.
I was prodded by my mother into braided hair
and traditional dresses to be forced to conform
to a world that had no place for me.
I used to think that God had put my brain in backwards
the way I never fit in anywhere
like a deformed puzzle piece on the face of the population
Never thought like my classmates,
their minds were neat Lego towers,
and a half sunset on the sharp jaw of the horizon
and mine was the unmapped crevasses
of the jungle,
all tiger fangs and ape calls,
with ideas swinging off of vines and
poetry sprouting out of the soil long before the first rain.

My father's voice, like cotton whips
on the skin of my back saying
God just makes some people different.
It took years for me to unbolt the
"under construction" signs from my ribs.
I knew that brown skin was not a disease and
I was not going to hell for listening to hip-hop,
that I could build skyscrapers from the ashes of my ancestors
with my bare hands, tall enough to graze the roots of heaven,
and still have enough left to leave behind
like breadcrumbs on the path to freedom.

Time was my teacher.
It taught me that our mouths were like machines.
I broke open books robotically
and read the work of poets that left everything I thought I knew
about this world shackled in the basements of abandoned factories.
I was addicted to words.
Needed a hit at least once a day,
twice when it rained and
four times on Sundays,
had first been introduced at seven years old but
didn't yet understand that it wasn't how you said them,
but the angle at which you injected them into your veins
and let them perpetuate in the bloodstream.
Ending up with a finished product
that exploded from your lips like an alphabet of grenades,
all firing to the rhythm of drumbeat from the eardrums in the room,
soaking in language like greedy queens,
as if voices were an endangered species
as if listening would be obsolete tomorrow.

I think God gave me words.
To save my life.
They could never resurrect the things I had lost
but they could patch over the wounds that never seemed to close.
They were laced in my IV in the hospital
and in the adhesive he used when he crafted me with his hands.
They were caught in the spokes of the crown he placed on my head
when he cracked open the clouds like eggshells to drop the
remix to the hallelujah chorus, struck a B chord,
and first rendered me the daughter of a King.

Transgalactic Love Affair

D.has

They say, our definition of space
is populated by an image of stars
that have to travel light years before they can reach our eyes.

Each one, a Message sent into the past.
A picture, as old as the time it took to get here.
They say looking into a night sky is like reliving History.

We are two galaxies spinning madly together,
in a nature of direction; we will never quite understand.

She inscribes lettered words into her breath
and sings them into glass bottles that are sent
all the way across the earth.
They arrive as soon as the Wind allows them to.

It is just Autumn, and the falling Sun wraps crimson arms around the horizon
like a hug too empty to feel like a home away from loneliness.
As light dwindles into nightfall. I imagine the arrival of her message...

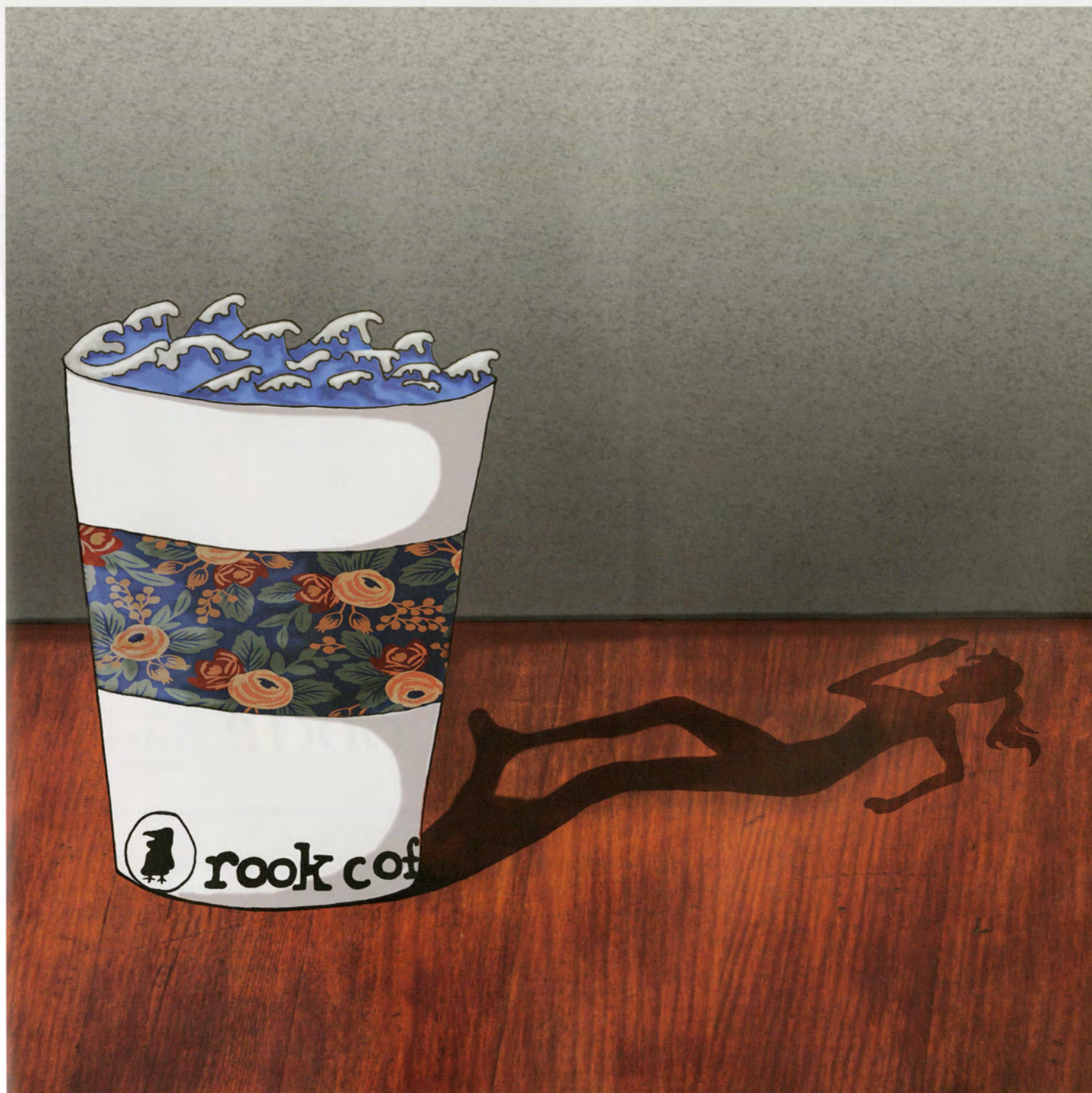
Oh how the breeze must feel that evening.

This moment's Darkness,
a reminder of the distance between us now.

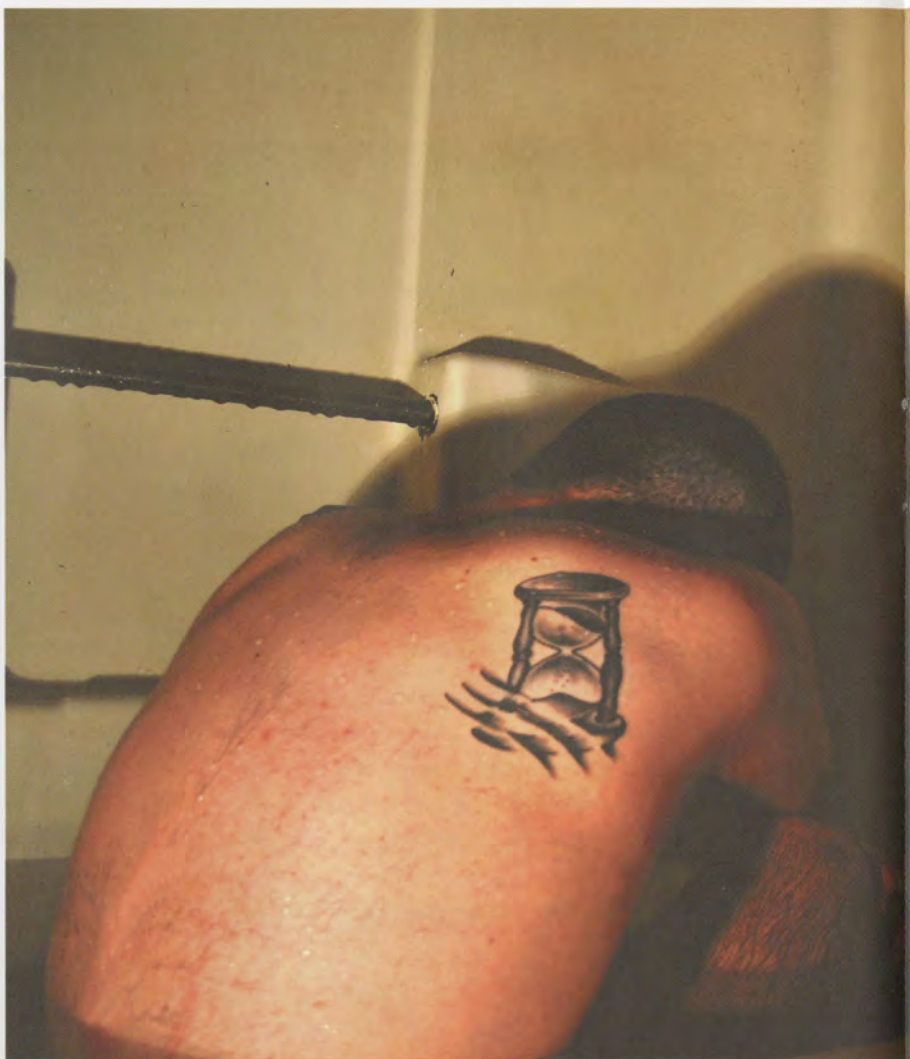
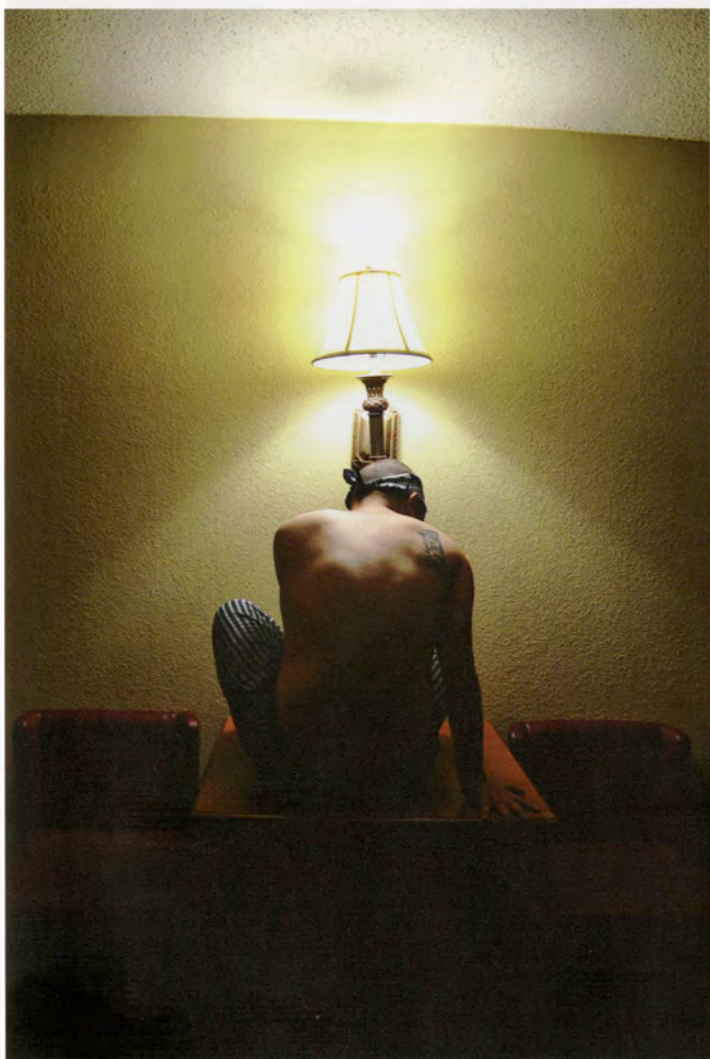
The absent pair of stars from her eyes
are bronzed fallen leaves under a magnifying glass.
Brown raised hands, as they volunteer vital pieces of themselves
as tributes into a state of temporary.
and here I am hoping I will last longer than one season.

And the only thing I can imagine,
is that the empty spaces between our distancing fingertips
are not only filled with expired love letters.

That after all the light years are travelled,
and I receive the message that says she loves me.
It will not be a component of the past but of the only present that we know to be true.



Self Portrait Colleen Bordiuk



Jorge A. Escobar

Artist Statement

My art typically showcases different aspects of my inner thoughts and myself. I really don't like showing my vulnerable side because I just never was into sharing my feelings. I'm the type of person that prefers to keep my emotions to myself and I deal with them on my own. Because of that I tend to use my art and photography as my outlet for releasing all of my built up emotions. Even though that sounds very cliché it's honestly true. Much of my work tends to lean towards more negative emotions because that's usually the type of emotion I feel like expressing. However, I also believe

that negative emotions create a bigger impact for the viewer. In addition to just using my photos to release my emotions, my work also stems from personal experiences and sometimes represents different scenarios of my past. Although I enjoy making my work personal I still want my work to be relatable to who ever chooses to view it.

My photographs *Bathwater* and *Motion Sickness* are both pieces that took inspiration from emotions that I've felt in the past but are still emotions that anyone feels. *Motion Sickness* mainly was inspired by my stress and frustra-

tion from working on my art finals last semester. After the semester ended I just decided I wanted to do shoot inspired by frustration. Frustration is something that anyone can feel which is why I find this piece to be relatable. I use motion blurs in the photo to help depict how intense frustration can be for some people. When it comes to *Bathwater* I mainly took inspiration from a song by one of the many bands I listen too. One of the lyrics to the song goes, "I watch the bathwater drain, it never looks quite the same." In short I was just inspired by this one lyric and past low points in life to create the



From left to right:
Inner Demons,
Bathwater, &
Motion Sickness

final piece. The piece overall depicts a sense sadness and despair due to the body position and slouched head. I still like to leave both of these pretty open to interpretation by the viewer.

In contrast to these two pieces, *Inner Demons* has much more of a backstory and concept for me. During my awkward teen years I found myself depressed a lot and I just really didn't seem to have a control over my own emotions because I kept them locked up for the most part. I chose to battle my emotions (or demons) on my own and always struggled to get out of the rut that I was often in.

That whole part of my life went away as I got older and found better means of dealing with my depression, however, I felt like I never really had the chance to fully express what I felt like at that point of my life. *Inner Demons* is a self-portrait that visually represents what it felt like to be me at this time of my life. The amazing dim lighting that my hotel room had worked great wonders for this photo. Along with the crouched body position I wanted to create a moody image and I'm personally happy with it. The photo depicts how my fourteen-year-old self felt during the lowest points of my

depression. The perspective I wanted to get from this photo is a literal look of how I felt other people saw me when I was at my lowest. When you see this image I want you to see it as an onlooker who's witnessing someone battling depression. *Inner Demons* is a work I'm quite proud of and it's one of my favorite pieces that I've done recently, but all three photographs really do well and describing what a lot of my work tends to be. My pieces can be personal at times but I still wish for viewers to create their own interpretation.

Untitled Hannahleigh Rios



How It Rained

Alyssa Kidwell

Do you remember how it rained
when we shared my umbrella
during that storm in May
because you had none and I was "a gentlemen"?
How I stared at raindrops in grass
when I walked you home
to hide the color in my cheeks.
It was raining then, too - the night you asked me
to kiss you
on the stoop of your apartment
late into night.
I tasted rain on your lips,
but you didn't seem to mind.
As we waited for the train -
the storm whipping your soaked hair about your shoulders.
You looked so beautiful that I told you
I loved you.
You didn't make a sound,
but I felt your fingers
lacing through mine.
Do you remember the day
on that bench in the park?
How the sun shone as it rained
and I told you
"That's what you are to me"?
You smiled
and I thought we were happy.

Do you remember how it rained?
Because I remember loving the downpours
reminding me of your smile, your lips.
You calmed the storm within me as another raged around us -
you made it all so beautiful.
I was so happy.
I thought you were too.
And I thought the rain
was our sacred place
where nothing could ever
go wrong.
But it rained on that night when you told me
it was over.
I begged you,
yet you still turned away, disappearing
into the downpour
the wind drowning out your words:
"There's someone else"
You said
"It's not your fault"
You said
"I loved you, once."
You said
Do you remember? How
I fell to my knees in the grass
and you just left me there -
salty rain from my cheeks
falling in drops on each blade.



Shifting of the Mind Stephen Proffitt

I've Never Been a Math Person

Katie Ciszek

Directions: Answer the following questions and show all necessary work. No calculators. I have changed some names and other details.

1. Suppose you have a 17 year old girl: 5'7", 128 lbs. Based on observation and data analysis, you have gathered that she is an excellent student, is well liked by her peers, is passionate about photography, music and boys, and is unfamiliar with the concept of free time. Now, add 1.5 months of fatigue, and subtract 3 weeks of sleep. Subtract 11 lbs. Multiply by (unjustified guilt + justified fear), and then divide her heart. Add 8 just for good measure. Then differentiate with respect to the sharpied x's that always stain the backs of her hands. What do you get?

Answer: Ellie Adams on the morning of May 8, 2013.

On the morning of May 8, 2013, Ellie Adams was not herself. She hadn't been for a while, but that day she was not trying to hide it. On the morning of May 8, 2013, I was preparing to take my AP Calculus exam. I hadn't studied enough, but later that day, I wouldn't give a fuck. There were tiny red rivers around the blue lakes of her eyes, and I still didn't understand derivatives. I shaded in Bs when I had to guess on a problem, and time shaded in the undersides of her eyes when she couldn't sleep. I would have answered those free response questions 1000 times over if it meant I'd never have to respond to Ellie's news on the afternoon of May 8, 2013.

"Can I talk to you?" Ellie didn't wait for an answer before hanging up.

I had been waiting for Ellie to ask me that. I knew something was wrong but if Ellie wants to talk about something, she will. And if you try to make her talk when she doesn't want to, then she'll curl into her own head like the legs of a dying spider. More often than not, she leaves you with only question marks and forehead creases. So I had resorted to making her CDs: happy playlists that lifted her spirits. But I guess on the morning of May 8, 2013, CDs weren't quite enough.

My inadequacies manifest themselves obnoxiously around the people that mean the most to me. Looking back, I was not a good enough friend to Ellie. I would have seen the signs. I would have pestered her into talking to me when she didn't want to; songs and the occasional batch of cookies are not a replacement for long phone calls or confrontations. I would have done more than nod dumbly as she talked to me that afternoon.

I nodded when she told me things had gotten worse at home. I nodded when she told me about Sacramento and her grandparents who lived there. I nodded when she told me she had just enough money to get across the country. I nodded when she told me her phone service would be cancelled and the occasional email would have to do. I nodded when she told me not to tell anyone where she was going. And especially why.

Strangely, I can't remember what happened after that. Swirling memory after memory, I suppose. Riding bikes in the fall. Shouting at the moon. Making tutus. Cutting our hair. Philosophical discussions on how to view the levitating bug on the invisible spider web as a metaphor. Flipping dimes to make movie decisions. Writing letters. Learning how to drive. Learning how to be alive.

2. Add 2 months and 4 CDs, subtract thoughts of calculus.

I was sitting with Ellie on a grassy patch of earth between a stop sign and a fire hydrant. I was playing with the grass and my shoelaces, because that's what happens when you're trying not to cry.

"Just say a few words," she said. "It'll make me feel better."

"I'm not good with words," I told her.

"Silence is fine too."

I let myself look at her, because we so often take that for granted.

She was such a mystery to me: ambiguity of the best variety. I wanted to unroll her mind and lay it flat like a map to examine her topography. All the mountains she has climbed would be there in print. Every river, stream, and estuary marks a rivulet that has flowed from the very lakes of her eyes. I'd scan each inch of terrain and try my hardest not to want to fix any of the pain, because we all know that some beautiful things are better left untouched by unclean hands. And her mind is a truly beautiful thing. The contour lines I'd find there would resemble the lines that have crossed her forehead, or each line of sight: the world according to Ellie. Everywhere she looks, a star: she puts Olber's paradox to rest.

I experienced a small eternity when I hugged Ellie goodbye. Two suitcases lingered by her feet, and wispy bangs cluttered her eyes. Her eyes were brighter, full of life and excitement, void of tiny red rivers, without shadow. A glance at her car windows, and I could see my own reflection had assumed all the shadows. But I smiled because I had never seen Ellie happier.

3. Let x = your best friend. What is the limit of your sanity as x approaches her car door and waves goodbye with fingers crossed?

At Maymont the next day, Colton Watson sent me a text attempting to be discrete in front of our friends.

Are you okay?

I received a 5 on my AB Calculus exam.

Colton received a text message: Yes.





Up and Away Samantha Webster

Animal Skull Kimberly Faye



If we were like trees
we would have hundreds of years
to build the protective bark.
We could stand through storms
stand through wars
and reach for the sky without a care.

If we were like trees
our size would not matter
tall and thick
short and skinny
the wind would treat us the same
the soil just as good
and the rain just as kind.

If we were like trees
our scars could be covered
in strips of new skin
washing away the past
while holding it close to our center.

But we are not like trees.
Our roots only extend
to the loose gravel at our feet,
our bark is soft,
our leaves clipped and styled.
And the wind is not a shaping force
as much as it is a nuisance.

We fight, we hate, we use.
Trees we are not.
But all we would need for happiness
is the sun in the sky
if we were like trees.

If We Were Trees

Sarah Freeze

Home Run

Jeremy Schultz

Charlie looked at his mother and imagined a day when she too could be nothing more than a photograph he avoided – a poignant reminder of the moments he took for granted and the home he always dreamt of fleeing.

A midday thunderstorm passed over East Crawford, Georgia. Inside a one-story house, Charlie Hayes sat and watched the storm. He was athletic with a dark tan and had tufts of dirty blonde hair poking out from under a baseball cap. Somber thoughts clouded his mind as he observed the drizzle on his kitchen window. There was a loud crack of lightning nearby, but he did not flinch. He wanted nothing more than to follow the storm out of this town tucked away in the Georgia countryside.

Charlie turned his head and watched his mother, Emma, wander about the kitchen with a vague sense of productiveness. She hummed a song to herself as she wiped off various counters and tidied up the decorative knickknacks that littered the room. Emma wore a lavender robe that skimmed the floor wherever she walked because her body was too frail to hold up the cloth. A matching lavender ribbon was lost within the tangled grey mat of split ends on top of her head.

Emma stopped herself from placing a peppershaker in the fridge

and frowned. She stared at the shaker for several seconds. Charlie could tell she was trying to remember what she meant to do with it. Her concerns soon dissipated as she set the pepper-shaker in the fridge and went back to humming her song.

For the past five years, Emma's mind had been in a rapid decay like an ice statue left out in the heat. The Alzheimer's went after her memories first. Charlie noticed that his mother's familiar anecdotes started to take on different endings, subtle variations in detail in the beginning, then gradually her understanding of the life she had lived became a mix of hyperbole and guesswork – more fiction than fact. After that, the Alzheimer's broke down her sense of reality. Her mind now seemed to be stuck in a state of confusion, as if caught in a waking dream.

The doorbell rang. Charlie looked outside and saw a heavyset man in business attire standing on the porch. The man struggled to keep a folder of papers dry. Charlie stood up, walked into the kitchen, and put his arm around his mother.

"Who is it?" Emma asked.

"It's just Coach Firth. He's probably stopping by to check up on us," said Charlie.

"Oh. That's nice of him."

"I have some things I need to talk to him about. Why don't you step out on the screen porch? I'll make us some lunch."

Emma gave her son an apprehensive look, but her eyes soon went soft after she felt his warm hand squeeze her shoulder. She patted Charlie on the back and smiled, "Okay, sweetie."

"Perfect. I'll be out there in a little while."

"All right." Emma lingered for a moment as if to say something else but then left the room in silence. Charlie knew his mother's mental state had deteriorated past the point of protest. Her opinions nowadays were not much more than mere commentary on a life she was no longer able to manage herself. He watched her go with love in his eyes, but her delicate stride made his tender thoughts harden.

He opened the front door and beckoned the man inside. "Hey, Mr. Barnes. Come in."



"Charlie, how are you?" asked Mr. Barnes.

"I'm alright. Would you like a cup of coffee?"

Mr. Barnes followed Charlie into the kitchen. "No, thanks. I'm fine."

They took a seat at the table, and Mr. Barnes handed Charlie a stack of papers. Charlie scanned the pages for a couple minutes but got lost in the legal jargon, and his attention drifted.

"This is just so you have something in writing, right?" asked Charlie.

"Yes, it's for our lawyers. Once these preliminaries have been taken care of, you can drop your mother off anytime you choose," said Mr. Barnes.

"Do the people who work at your facility really care about what they do?"

"Of course. Our care providers try to make the residents' lives as easy as possible."

"But are they actually happy? Tell me the truth."

"Honestly, most residents enjoy our care, sure, but some can never get comfortable. We can't replace home." Charlie stared at the ground. "You know, as far as I know baseball isn't going anywhere."

Charlie shook his head. "But it seems like everyday she requires more attention."

"Well, Charlie, sometimes people have to do what's best for their loved ones." Charlie's pen hovered over the signature line. "If you want I can come pick up the paperwork later."

"Yeah. Okay. I just – I need some

time to read this over," said Charlie. He imagined his mother out back watching the storm and a fleeting smile came across his face. She was all he had left. She was also the only thing tying him to a home plagued by misfortune and regret.

Charlie hunched over the railing on his front porch and watched Mr. Barnes' taillights disappear around a corner. Soft thuds of rain landed on the brim of his hat as he looked down at a flowerbed overrun with weeds. He spotted a worn-out baseball hemorrhaging wool yarn. He walked down, grabbed it, and sat down on the porch stairs. Charlie tried to stuff the yarn back into the baseball but soon gave up and just looked it over. He could

still hardly believe how so much of his life had all come down to his love for a five-ounce ball. Soon, he would be leaving on a full-ride baseball scholarship to Georgia Tech. This was his shot at something more. Opportunity was pushing Charlie out the door while his conscience kept pulling him back.

Charlie looked past the white leather and observed his neighborhood. The red cherry trees that lined his street were still clinging on to the last bit of summer. An older man was sitting in his open garage while slowly chewing tobacco. A few kids were racing the dirty streams that hugged the street curbs to a nearby gutter. Charlie had little respect left for these townsfolk who lived and died by the same streets they had always called home.

He knew this town was not for people with any kind of legitimate dreams. Young people were conditioned to value the simple things. Intellect was ridiculed. Ambition was shrugged off. "Success is relative" was a phrase Charlie grew sick of hearing. The people in his town took pride in what little they had and anyone who wanted more was often considered an outcast. Charlie believed he might have remained an outcast, if it wasn't for his high batting average. Watching these people only helped reaffirm his choice to leave.

Every day he continued living in this town, he betrayed the future he had envisioned for himself when he was just a little boy and he had pointed at the horizon, asking his parents where it led.

Charlie watched the children down the street chase one another in circles. He thought about how he used to be one of these children, but had never stopped running in circles. His life had been small, and insignificant, and hollow, until his skill on the

diamond caused the spotlight to land on him. And there he was, illuminated and alone, with one hell of a decision to make.

Charlie walked back inside and began fixing his mother food. After reheating some pasta, he grabbed a couple forks and headed to the screen porch. On his way out, a framed picture on the wall caught his eye. It was a photo of his father before he walked out on them. Charlie had hidden the picture so he would not be reminded of him. Emma must have found it and naively put it back on display, unaware that her husband was gone. It was a picture that remind-

Charlie had little respect left for these townsfolk who lived and died by the same streets they had always called home.

ed Charlie of the world that existed outside their small town. He often wondered what his life would be like if his father had chosen to stay, but he never blamed his father for leaving. Charlie secretly envied him. The only question was whether he had the audacity to follow his father's lead.

He looked down on the kitchen table. An idle pen sat on the paperwork Mr. Barnes had brought over. His attention was drawn to the line at the bottom of the page that was still aching for a signature he had yet to write.

Charlie walked out onto the screen porch. A sharp creak in the floorboard caused his mother to turn around, her eyes lit up like a puppy that had forgotten where its master went.

"Hey, sweetie!" she said. Charlie put down their food and took a seat next to his mother. "You know I was just thinking, when's the last time

me and your father took you to the cabin?"

"We - we don't own that cabin anymore," said Charlie.

"Wait. We don't?"

"No. We had to sell it."

"Oh... oh, yes. That's right. I

remember now, sweetie. Well that doesn't have to stop us, does it? How about a baseball game? You still like baseball, don't you?"

"Yes, mom, I still like baseball."

"Perfect! When's your father coming home? I'll talk to him about it tonight."

Charlie stared into his mother's eyes and could almost see a par-

ticular emptiness in them - a loving mind robbed of logic.

"Dad is..." Charlie's voice trailed off as he debated breaking his mother's heart for the hundredth time. He shut his eyes tight to wrestle tears.

"Charlie! What's wrong sweetie?" Emma took a napkin

and wiped away his tears.

Charlie looked at his mother and imagined a day when she too could be nothing more than a photograph he avoided - a poignant reminder of the moments he took for granted and the home he always dreamt of fleeing. He smiled and grasped Emma's hand tight, "Nothing, mom. It's fine. Let's just sit here awhile, okay?"

Charlie felt a sudden breeze glide past his neck. He breathed deep, shut his eyes, and felt the wind against his skin. He wondered what other places this very same gust had already traveled to and who had been touched by it. From the West or from the East, North Star to southern horizon, this breeze had traveled to meet him, and he felt a desperate feeling inside him to go to all the places this wind had been and all the places it would continue to go forever.



Chapter 17 Leanne Shenk

On Falling for You

Taylor Broughfman

Like sprawling ivy
You, into my guarded heart
Have made yourself home



Right:
Lovers
Left:
Upshot



Xon Henry

Artist Statement

I am interested in the personification of form; how abstract forms take on connotations of bodies, emotions, memories, and feelings. For these works, the material choices connect the work to time. The ephemeral nature of the material speaks to the temporal realities and fleeting feelings of desire. I may attempt to preserve the desire, yet these preservations are never as crisp like fresh fruit. My memories are no longer fact as they become grayed through nostalgia. Only these images will preserve the work. The work will slowly rot, decay, be eaten, and disintegrate. It's lifetime never escapes the natural cycle of life.

For this series of work, I reflect on sexuality and its relationship to nature. I wish to confront the notion that some sexualities are unnatural, invasive, or infectious. Again, material becomes a major component within my research. The natural elements have all been gathered from the lawns of my childhood homes. They are all taken from dead evergreens. The evergreen is persistent, resilient, prickly, and a religious icon. I am particularly interested in the texture of the pine as both something soothing, yet rough and tough. I wonder how these textures speak to that moment of contact, intimacy, desire, and convergence.



"Blue Shades"
based on the piece by Frank Ticheli

~ The contributions of one individual can inspire generations after their time...

Kimia Zadegan *Kimia Zadegan*
Tessa Tang *Tessa Tang* 4.23.14

Saccharine

Marissa Bricker

Sickly sweet.

That's what she is.

Bubblegum, ginger bread, vanilla soaked marshmallow.

Sweet.

Sugar drips out of the words she speaks

Cotton candy – fluffy words whose savory goodness melts in your mouth

Before you can realize the true story.

There is no substance

She is a candy apple.

Don't let her artificial demeanor fool you.

Her caramel will stick to you

Before you realize that she is rotten.

She is an acquired taste

After several bites, it's clear you've had too much

But you can't get rid of her that easily

She'll leave a bitter taste in your mouth;

Stain your tongue

Yet leave you wanting more

Sundog

Tommy Sheffield

[1] Sundog — n; 1. Another word for parhelion: an atmospheric phenomenon that creates bright spots of light in the sky, often a luminous ring or halo on either side of the sun. 2. A small or incomplete rainbow.

Now see Charlie Chase, he
isn't much to look at. He's
got this face, see, that's all
bent and cracked at the edges.
He's got this smile—no teeth—
but his gums are pink and green,
cancer-patched from the chewing
tobacco.

But he's not all bad. There's
a subtle kindness to the way he begs.
To the way he wanders from streetlight
to streetlight to sidewalk to park grass.
The way he slides down the orange tube,
lies in the shade of the rope bridge,
swings on the swing set until the sunlight
drapes over his face for the last time
each night. He smiles his gums
at the moonlight.

He has a way of walking,
with this stumble every left step,
limping like a pirate, no cane,
his spine yanking his waist
to keep his legs moving;
I tell ya man, if you
saw him in a bar,
and he knew ya,
he'd buy you a drink
with the last coins he had.

His eyes,
they are either light blue
or slight gray;
tucked beneath eyelid shells;
hardened by winter;
held tight shut like
a clam's gray ligament hinge,
against the wind.

When I first shook his hand,
and felt his fold-over mitten fingers,
they were cracked, like crunched ice,
or dropped glass; Charlie once smashed
a glass between his bare palm and a drunken skull,
and the glass cut his hand into jagged sections
of interlaced skin.

Oh right, back to how he got the limp.
Cerebral Palsy, I believe. Spastic diplegia.
It made it hard for him to go anywhere fast.
He'd drag that leg like a task, all up and down
the Harrisonburg streets, like a rigor mortis limb.

Occasionally I'd see him
hop the train, ride it through town.
People always wondered how he'd got on,
and stayed on the back of the caboose,
arms clutching iron bars, occasionally
letting go and leaning out to wave;
he'd hop off at the other side of town.

At some point last year, he started wearing
purple everywhere he went. All his clothes
were purple and gold, the colors of
James Madison University;
and I saw him less and less,
as he spent more time sitting
at the corner of Carrier
Library and Hillcrest
House. He would drink
coffee and chat with students.
He got to know a few of them.
Called them by name.
He'd even wait for hours
just to see them. His
coffee growing cold
in his hands.

One late night in December,
outside some bar downtown,
a drunk JMU student
started insulting him,
calling him an ugly fucker,
calling him deformed;
Charlie swung a fist
at the face of his anxiety,
and it ducked, and punched back,
and kept punching, and soon
poor Mr. Chase was lying
in a puddle of his own flesh.

It was I who found him,
hours after the fight,
with miles between us
and the nearest open hospital,
and the night wholly empty of other souls.
I brought him back to the place I was staying—
a nice dry spot in a tunnel beneath a bridge
beside interweaving trains tracks—
and lay him down on a blue blanket
on the graveled ground,
and hoped for the bleeding to stop.

In the morning, when his wounds had dried,
aided by yellow newspaper and old-sock bandages,
I left him lying in the tunnel, to go get some food;
he'd be needing it soon.

When I got back, I found only
the indentation of his body
in the bloody snow.

I follow the footprints,
traced in red-white crust.
I thrust through slush
with feet in hole-strewn shoes,

feeling my toes numb and tingle
as I traverse the pink snow.

And what do you know,
I find poor old Charlie Chase,
lying on his back where the old
tent used to be. His arms clutching
upward, rigid frost coating his hands,
fingers shaking with icy shivers. His face,
already cracked, now looks like an iceberg
about to break into pieces. His smile,
stuck to his face like tape, quivers
so slightly, his gums tucked tightly
beneath lips. I watch him try to move,
ever so lightly, once he finally sees I'm there.
I help him stand, but his left leg gives out
beneath him and he falls back down.
He must've gotten scared
alone in the tunnel,
near the little fire I had set,
not knowing where he was, and
ran. With none of liquor's warmth,
he succumbed to winter's bite,
his eyes shut tight against the wind,
his scarred hands held together
as if praying. I see him
struggle to lift himself,
one last time,
and collapse on the weak leg.

I can still see him riding that train,
waving at the people he passes.
I can still see him wearing purple,
drinking coffee with students.
I can still see him bleeding
from between his wounds.
I can still hear him breathing.

Anti-Modesty Anthem

Sarah Hogg

I probably do not
occupy
the type of space you think I should.

My thick thighs
and
loud voice
are only allowed to show themselves
in the private space of your bedroom
when your mother isn't home.

Crop tops
and
my stomach
go hand in hand
when it is your hands
doing the touching,
but only
behind
closed doors.

I probably do not
occupy
the type of space you think I should.

Fat girls are told
we must have curves in the right places
and if we don't,
we might as well cover up now
because modesty
is the closet thing to beautiful
a fat girl can get.

But
modesty is no match for the fourteen year old girl
who was told that she was a vision,
but only in the dark.

For the eighteen year old
Who was told she didn't have the body
college men would want.

Or for the twenty year old woman
Who is repeatedly told that since she shed some weight
She can maybe
Finally
Find a partner.

No.
Modesty is no match for me.

I probably do not
occupy
the type of space you think I should.

I do not occupy
the space between your sheets
and your mattress.
You cannot enjoy my thick thighs
and loud voice
and soft stomach
if all you want to do afterwards
is hide me.

I occupy
all of the places I sit
stand
run
and lie in.
Unapologetically.

I probably do not
occupy
the type of space you think I should.

But
you are no match for me,
and I refuse to shrink myself.



Jacob's Ladder Tessa Tang



Violinist Samantha Webster



A Grand Day Out

Hannah Burgess

Two figures walked toward the bank of a river, their poles trailing over their shoulders like blades of grass in the August breeze. They sat; feet dangled; a wrist flicked; a line cast, and the trap was set. Suddenly, the plastic lure disappeared and the battle began.

Excited yelps carried across the estuary like chattering birdsong. Muddy water churned as iridescent scales burst through the veil separating water and sky. The beast swerved and the pole bowed, but with a final yank and a giddy squeal she claimed her elusive prize.

D. Has

Breakup Letter

from Beauty to the Beast

This letter, fragile in nature
is poised beneath Belle's fireplace.
Elegantly crisped around all the edges
and partially tucked amongst the ashes.
He swears he did not come to look for questions.
She did not owe him any answers.

He enters her chamber,
eyes worn, wandered, and searching.
The roaring of the blaze the only sign of her existence.
In his attempt to put the flames to rest,
he stumbles upon this note.
Clawed and shredded at the core,
still whole enough to be understood.

It reads:

To Adam,

There should be a word
for how easily I am infatuated with potential,
how I am able to open up the belly of reality
and separate glimpses of possibility
until I convince myself
you could've ever been more than the
"broken thing I've been trying to fix."

Separating you from my smile was like,
extracting dissolved molecules
back into their solidified forms.
Some say impossible,
I say barely trivial.

I can't imagine the curse of a flicked wrist
inflicting enough madness into your heart
to convince you that you needed love
to make yourself human again.
I think you've made it far beyond that point by now.
You cannot be changed back anymore.

They tell me that I always fall in love
with all the things that could never love me back.
They call me an angel
with a fondness for the touch of a demon.
But in reality I just hope there is still
a fragment of light inside of you that could improve upon darkness.

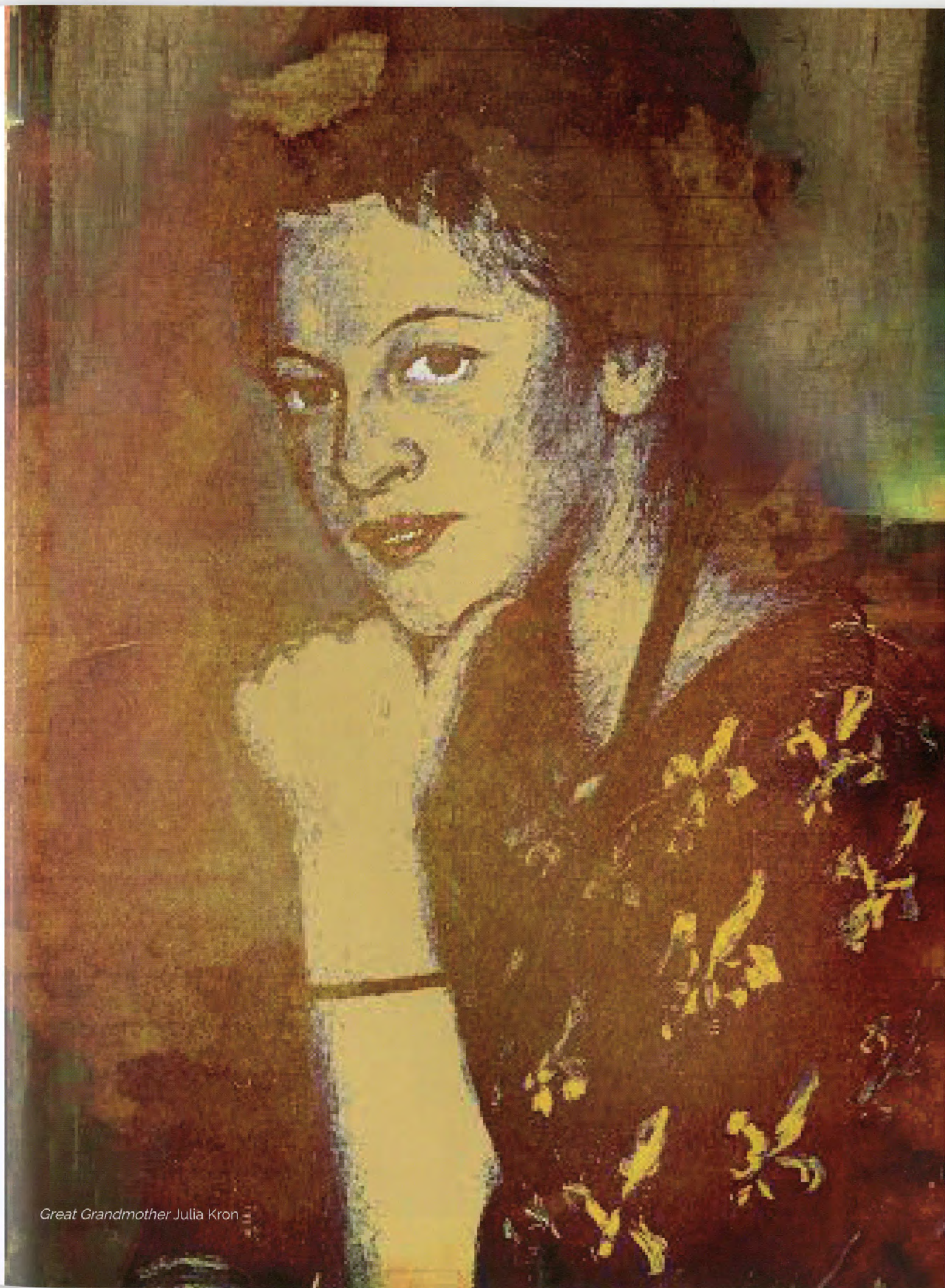
**I suppose, all I have said
is that I don't think I'm the one you are looking for.**

My sincerest apologies,
Belle

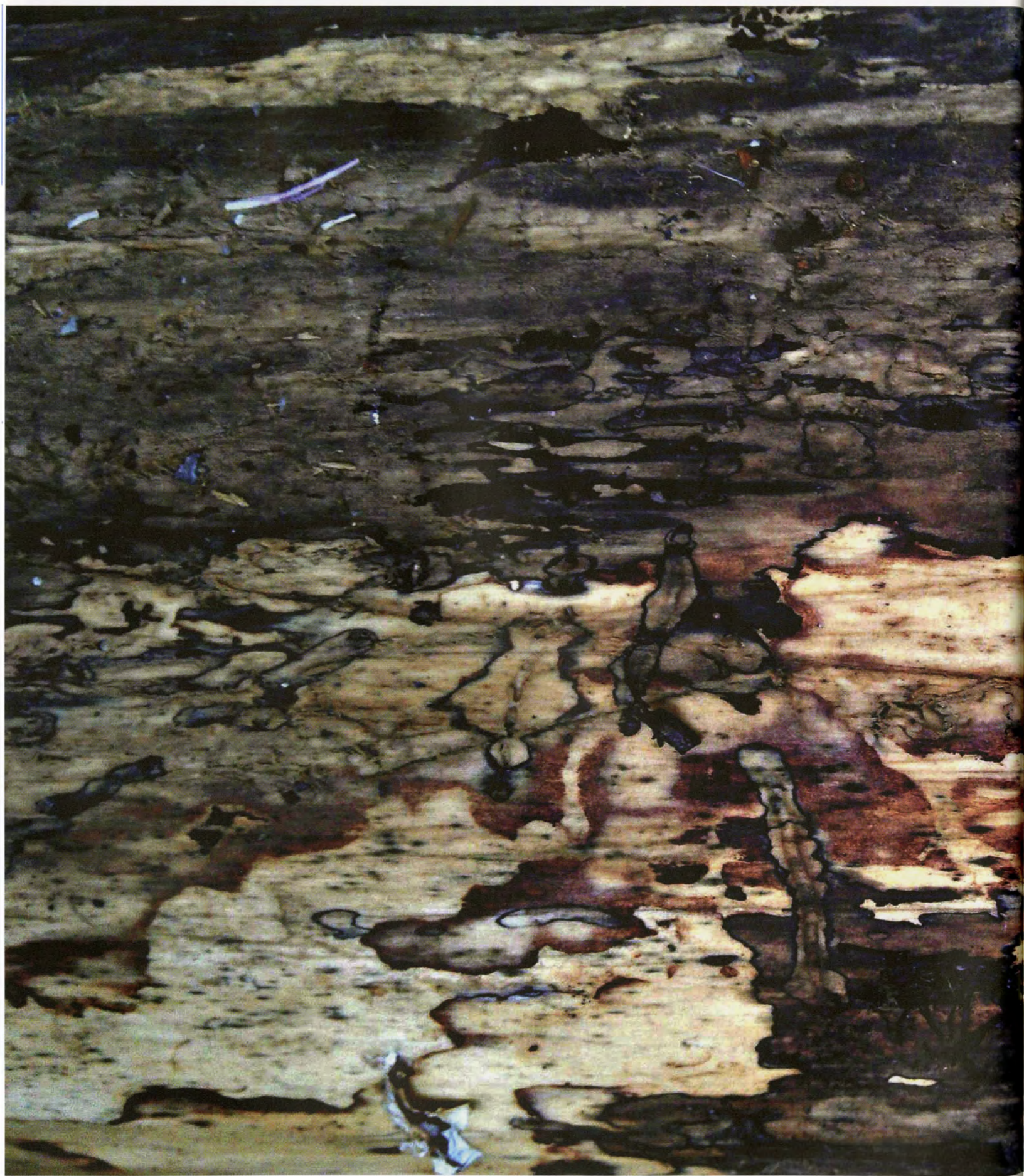
The Beast's palms release the letter
and return the papered dagger to the fire from which it came.
He formulates whatever butterflies were leftover
from the last time she made him feel needed
into a defeated grin; his heart
drowns into his soul
as his throat exhales the words:

**"But Love, the walls you built around your heart
is the only place I know to call home.**

Without you, no sunlight can pierce through
the veiled windows of this palace.
You were the only rose whose thorns I respected.
Without you, I cannot imagine my own existence
and I only came here to remind you
that if our love made me a monster
I would remain a Beast until my heartbeat stills."



Great Grandmother Julia Kron





Wood Allison Reese



Excerpt from *Snapshots*

Sarah Morris

She's been cat-called and grabbed, prodded and slapped. This man's hands are no different from the hands of other men, or boys, or the woman who hit her on the face when she was love-drunk and trying something new. His hands are calloused and cold, dark and strange yet familiar. These hands do not caress or touch her skin lightly. They ravage her body, and tear at shorts she had worn because she found them unflattering. His hands do not know the meaning of her "stops" or "nos" or "fuck offs." Or his hands are denying her these declarations.

The walk she had been taking turns into a spectacle of hands and sweat and bent blades of grass. She finally pushes him away, but not before his hands have taken pieces of her to hold onto.

She tells me these things in her jeep with the lights off, the engine quiet, the only light coming from a couple stars while the moon is hiding. She does not cry, she does not scream or pound her fists on the steering wheel. She merely speaks these things to me, and my heart breaks for what his hands have done to her body—her body that carries a growing being. And we wonder why telling men that she is pregnant does not deter them from wanting to take advantage of her body. And I wish in this moment that I knew exactly where he lived so I could burn the fucking place down while he sleeps peacefully with her scent still lingering on his fingers.

Why I'm Still Teething

Sarah Meirose

I bite my lip every time I feel alone.
Lately my mouth is so full of blood that I can hardly speak.

When I sit with him on his couch—his hand on my thigh,
asking me why I won't let him go farther—
I feel like he's got me pinned in a corner where my only option is the truth.
And once it's out there, once I tell him how I was attacked,
I can see the change in the way the lines around his mouth shift.
I have seen this all before, the way his lips
pull tight together and how his eyes practically scream,
"I can fix that," but then his voice says, "You're still beautiful."
As if me being a survivor and me being beautiful
have to be mutually exclusive occurrences.

They all say these things...how I am so brave and strong,
especially considering "how this sort of thing breaks a person."
I grind my teeth because I refuse to believe that.

It is a common practice to repair broken objects with melted gold,
because although the original object was beautiful,
it is more beautiful to see how it was put back together stronger.
I stand and sigh and pace the room and he refuses
to see that the full length of my veins run with gold.

He raises a hand to my mouth and tells me
that I need to stop biting my lip.
He says I am like a baby that is teething--
that I should be over it by now,
that I am safe with him...
and yet the way his hand feels on top of my mouth
makes me feel anything but.

Window Overlooking Caribbean Christian Brown



The sky is a whirlpool of stars
They dance and laugh with a flurry
They wriggle and swoosh through the
clamor and commotion.

Underneath the hurly-burly sky,
Lie rocky, dusty, dirt roads.
They lead to a tiny cottage
Decorated with wind chimes ringing
In the warm, salty breeze.

In the distance, you hear the faint
Song of a music box. Its tune is soft
Like a lullaby. The song whispers
To you to lie down and close your tired,
Heavy eyes.

Behind the small cottage, there is a
Sturdy, wooden dock. An old, rickety
Fishing boat is tied to a notch in a post.
As you walk along, the sky turns from
Baby blue to charcoal black.
Large raindrops begin to pound on the wood
Hail falls like bombs and thunderbolts
Create aftershocks that rattle the silent, sleeping ground.

As the clouds laugh and tease you from up high,
You run to the small cottage to seek shelter.
Immediately, you sink into the calm oasis.
The crackle of the wood stove and the whistle of a kettle
Flows over you. Slowly, sleep begins to creep up
And protect you from the storm attacking the outside world.

The Storm

Leslie Johnson

Index

A
A Grand Day Out, 38
A River of Consciousness, 5-7
Animal Skull, 23
Anti-Modesty Anthem, 35

B
Bathwater, 15-16
B-Chord, 11-12
Bloom, 3
Blue Shades, 31
Bordiuk, Colleen, 14
Breakup letter from the Beauty to the Beast, 39
Bricker, Marissa, 32
Broughfman, Taylor, 28
Brown, Christian, 26 & 45
Burgess, Hannah, 38

C-E
Chapter 17, 28
Ciszek, Katie, 19-20
Escobar, Jorge A., 15-16
Excerpt from Snapshots, 43

F-G
Faye, Kimberley
Fisher, Brittany, 11-12
Freeze, Sarah, 24
Future Hobo, 8
Great Grandmother, 40
Gym Rat, 9

H
Has, D., 13 & 39
Henry, Xon, 9 & 30
Hogg, Sarah, 35
Home Run, 25-27
How It Rained, 18

I-J
I've Never Been A Math Person, 19-20
If We Were Trees, 24
Inner Demons, 15
Jacob's Ladder, 36
Johnson, Leslie, 46

K-L
Kidwell, Alyssa, 18
Kron, Julia, 40
Lessons From Lightning, 1
Lovers, 30

M
Marmolejo, Dominique, 4
McNeilly, Joanna, 1-2
Meirose, Sarah, 44
Morris, Sarah, 43
Motion Sickness, 16

N-P
Napping Doja, 26
On Falling For You, 28
Portraiture, 1-2
Proffit, Stephen, 19

R-S
Reese, Allison, 41-42
Riley, Meagan, 10
Rios, Hannahleigh, 17 & 43
Saccharine, 32
Schmucker, Steven, 8
Schultz, Jeremy, 25-27
Self Portrait, 14
Sheffield, Tommy, 5-7 & 33-34
Shenk, Leanne, 28
Shifting of the Mind, 19
Snowden, Carly, 3
Spread, cover
Sundog, 33-34

T
Tang, Tessa, 31 & 36
The Storm, 46
The port de bras of a drummer, 4
Transgalactic Love Affair, 13
Tsurugaoka Hachimangu, 43
Tweets From 2 am, 10

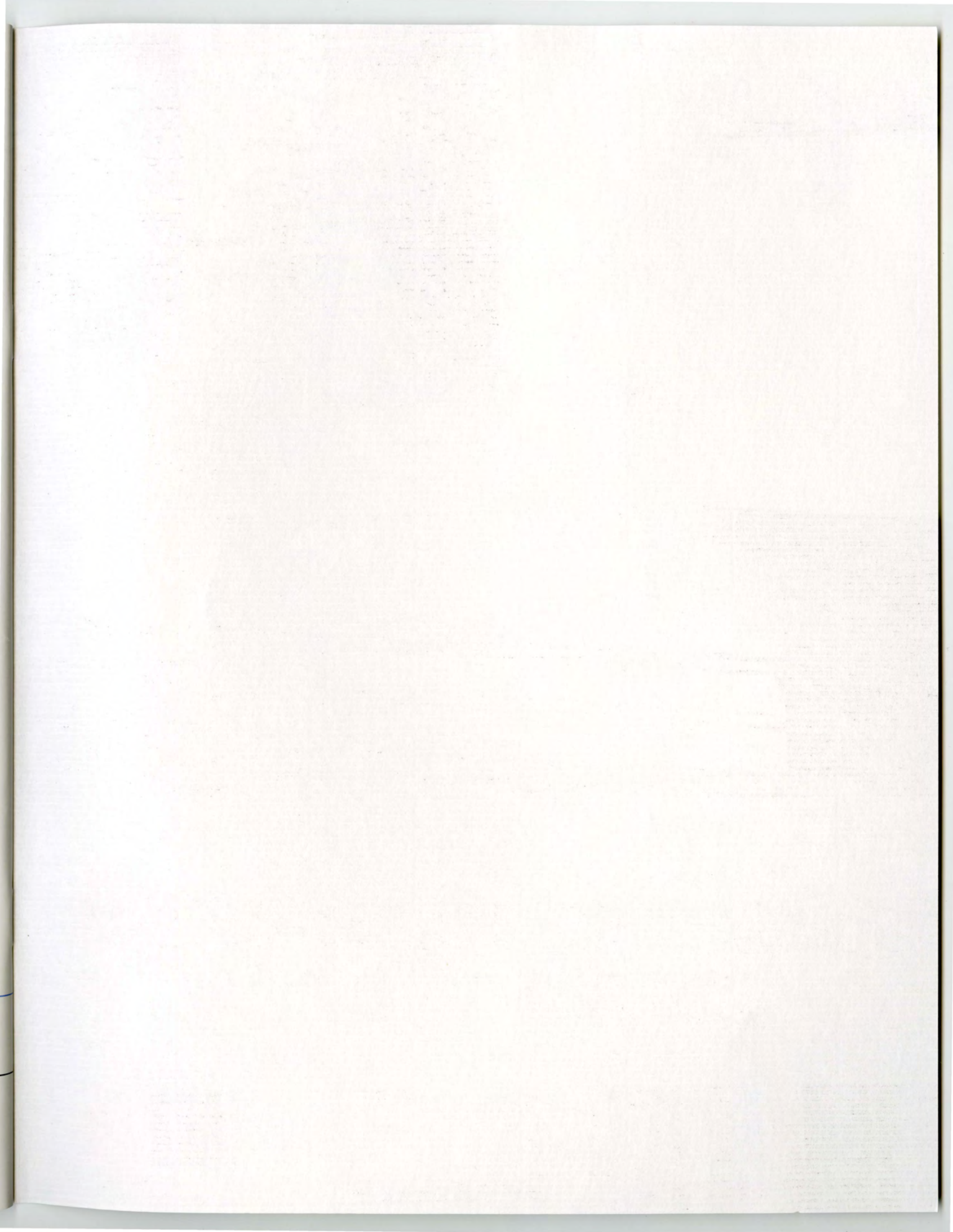
U-V
Untitled, 17
Up and Away, 21-22
Upshot, 29
Velling, Zoe, 1
Violinist, 37-38

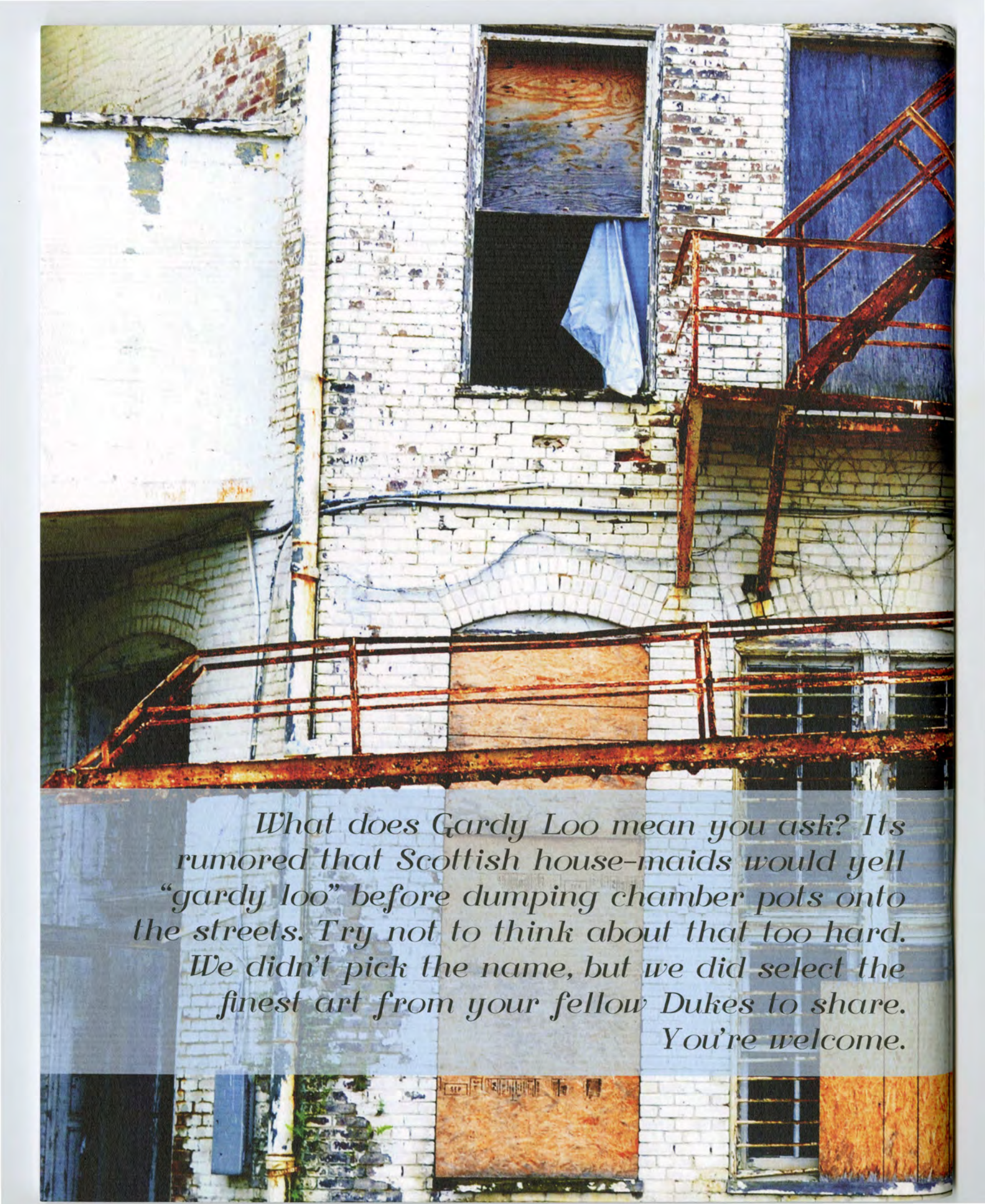
W-Z
Webster, Samantha, 21-22, 37-38
Why I'm Still Teething, 44
Window Overlooking Carribean, 45
Wood, 41-42
Zadegan, Kimia, 31



Cover art by Jorge Escobar,
entitled *Spread*

1-800-4-A-ARMOR
Logan, AR 71558
(501) 326-2222



A photograph of a dilapidated white brick building. A rusted metal fire escape is attached to the side. A window has a blue cloth hanging out. The building shows signs of age and decay, with peeling paint and exposed brick.

*What does Gardy Loo mean you ask? Its
rumored that Scottish house-maids would yell
“gardy loo” before dumping chamber pots onto
the streets. Try not to think about that too hard.
We didn’t pick the name, but we did select the
finest art from your fellow Dukes to share.
You’re welcome.*